Science Bulletin

Volume 1 | Number 7 Article 2

5-1929

Title - Masthead

SCIENCE BULLETIN

A Service Bulletin for Teachers of High School Science. Published Monthly by the Extension Division and Edited by the Departments of Natural and Physical Science.

IOWA STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

Editor-in-Chief: R. W. Getchell. Advisory Board: Dr. L. Begeman, Head, Department of Physical Science; Dr. E. J. Cable, Head, Department of Natural Science.

VOLUME I MAY, 1929 NUMBER 7

ANNIVERSARIES OF SCIENCE

General

To know biography is to have a knowledge of history. By a study of the biography of our scientists we may secure a very satisfactory knowledge of the development of most scientific discoveries. The life and works of many of the noted scientists present a story of adventure and achievement which to the young may become a great inspiration.

The brief references in our textbooks to notable discoveries seldom arouse very much enthusiasm nor do they relate them to the science as a living and developing subject. Too frequently the pupil assumes that discovery arises through some stroke of genius, and that scientific ideas spring full-grown and completely formulated from the mind of their discoverer.

Much interest and enthusiasm in a subject or a discovery is aroused when the pupil begins to look up the records and sees the many contributing causes that led to its development. For example, Archimedes is given the credit for discovering the rules for determining density, but the student commits them to memory without in any wise knowing the circumstances which contributed to their discovery. To Archimedes it was a thrilling affair. When the student studies his life, these rules become a vital factor in his interest in density. During the investigation of the subject, many other very fundamental facts concerning physics are secured, showing its important relationship to other subjects. Our text books seldom arrange for such biographical studies, thus making it difficult to know how or when to present them.

We keep alive the achievements of our national heroes by celebrating their birthdays, or we arouse patriotism by celebrating the anniversary of some historic event. Why not in our science subjects commemorate the birthdays of some of our noted scientists and arrange a program for a class period? At this time various members of the class may present short biographies and discuss various subjects which the scientist has been vitally instrumental in developing. Or we may take the anniversary of some remarkable discovery and have papers prepared concerning the people and the events leading up to it. An example of this would be the discovery of oxygen by Joseph Priestly. Much more interest in oxygen and its discovery might be so secured. At the same time, the student would secure a better understanding of the early conditions of scientific study both as to lack of equipment and information, and to erroneous ideas which had to be overcome.

In the field of biological science there is no one who has stimulated the idea of careful, systematic study more than Charles Darwin. Although his conclusions have aroused bitter controversy, they have evoked much careful research and have given to the world a fund of information. Papers on his travels and work would be very profitable.

Asa Gray did a great work in organizing a systematic study of plant life. A careful survey of his life and work would inspire a love for plants that is much needed today.

It may be difficult to classify Louis Pasteur definitely with either biological or chemical science but this very fact makes his investigations all the more rich in topics for study. His early ambition lead him into